

ORDINARY TIME – Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

RECOLLECTING OURSELVES FOR WORSHIP

Music (please use this time for quiet and reflection)

Gong [followed by silence]

Call to Worship

Hymn – 459

Opening Prayer

OUR HUMANNES AND GOD'S GRACE

Call to Confession

Unison Prayer of Confession

Gracious God, I bully myself. I push myself to have feelings or maintain feelings that I believe are essential for me to uphold. As a consequence, I drive away feelings I believe are harmful or irrelevant. In reflection, the feelings themselves are not what is central here, but the drive or insistence, the pressure actually, that I preserve a particular, familiar and desired feeling state. It is this pressure that is harmful, and I am so accustomed to the pressure, and also to acquiescing to it, that I no longer sense the pressure when it is impacting me. This pressure is like a voice screaming at me which I can sense but not directly hear. I need both awareness of this pressure and also relief from it. When the pressure overtakes me, I ask you to silence whatever sound it makes so I can get some distance from it and in the process get some calm, some rest. Help me to remember that I have an obligation to myself, and to others who are abused by this pressure, to seek relief when the pressure is too great.

Personal Prayer of Confession in Silence

Assurance of Pardon

LISTENING FOR THE WORD OF GOD

Story for the Children

Scripture – Mark 4:35-41

Prompting

Silence and Reflection

RESPONDING TO THE WORD OF GOD

Hymn – 261

Announcements

Minute for Mission

Our Gifts and Offerings

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise Christ all creatures here below;

Praise Holy Spirit, Comforter;

One God, Triune, whom we adore. Amen.

The Lord's Supper

Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your name,

your kingdom come,

your will be done,

on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins

as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us in the time of trial

and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours

now and forever. Amen.

GOING OUT – to serve, to journey, to live the word

Charge and Benediction

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

|        |       |                                |
|--------|-------|--------------------------------|
| TODAY  | 10:00 | Worship and Church School      |
|        | 11:00 | Coffee and Fellowship          |
|        | 11:20 | Conversation                   |
|        | 12:00 | Lunch Bunch                    |
| MONDAY | 1:30  | Presbyterian Women, at Olwen's |

Lectionary Readings from Cycle B for July 1, 2018

2 Samuel 1:1, 17-27; Psalm 130;

2 Corinthians 8:7-15; Mark 5:21-43

F.Y.I.

The Presbyterian Women meet tomorrow at 1:30pm, at Olwen's home. The lesson is #9. Pam Novelly is the leader. Joan Schmutz is the hostess.

"Our small change can make a Big Difference." Please give your pennies, nickels and dimes etc. to the Presbyterian Hunger Fund. A can on the table in the coffee room needs donations.

Ushers: Jim Plein and Jenny Goldgur.

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Our web site is <[www.faithpresbyterianrp.org](http://www.faithpresbyterianrp.org)>

Elders: Marolyn Bode, Jim Plein, Karen Kessel.

Deacons: Richard Egan, Mary Jane Beccaria, Wanjiru Muthamia.

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## Ordinary Time Following Pentecost

There is a tendency in all of us to maintain control, particularly when it comes to our internal life. We have a need to manage our feelings, thoughts and impulses so that our decorum does not falter. The difficulty we encounter in this is that our need to not appear out of control extends not only to how we are in the exterior world, but also to the interior world such that in the service of maintaining propriety we lose the essential capacity to know what we are thinking and feeling. The idea that guides this is an erroneous one: that if we do not know what we are thinking and feeling we are less likely to express a thought and feeling that is egregious. The opposite is true. The more we know about our interior, the better.

Carl Jung likened the interior world to a park. Sigmund Freud likened it to a jungle. In this matter I am more a Freudian than a Jungian. Wandering around in the interior is not something about which to be casual; it is something about which to be watchful. It is possible to be surprised by what resides within, and it is better to be mindful regarding what surfaces in awareness than to be caught totally off-guard.

Where this is particularly true is when we find ourselves encountering feelings and thoughts that are especially distressing, so much so that we are disoriented and have a difficult time functioning. These are times when we need to find a way to turn the internal volume down, so we can get some distance from what is engaging us. The text today gives us permission to ask this of God. It is legitimate to ask to be kept safe when our interior is too much of a jungle and we need it to be a little more like a park.

[Jim Robie, 6-21-18]

### **Ordinary Time – 5th Sunday after Pentecost (Mark 4:35-41)**

This text comes to us in Ordinary Time following Pentecost which puts it in a particular context: we have been engaged for some time with God's efforts to enlarge our experience of our life and therefore our ego has become familiar with the experience of being intruded upon by thoughts and feelings which make us uncomfortable, and we have learned to pay attention to these thoughts and feelings in an effort to learn something about ourselves. The reason this context is important is that the text is unhelpful if our ego has not yet learned that it is not the only reality at work in our interior and has therefore become more receptive to and especially pliable toward thoughts and feelings which it has learned to ignore or oppose. This text, like the one from last week (Mark 4:26-34), are cautions about our ego's tendency to take control of this disclosing which God is orchestrating by making the disclosing into something that suits us rather than our being receptive and allowing God to unfold our life as God sees fit.

In the text Jesus says to the disciples, i.e., those who are learning his way, "Let us cross to the other side." The Greek says literally: "Let us traverse through." Traverse means "to travel across or through." Through, "moving in one side and out of the other side" of something, not going around it. This phrase is a fairly accurate description of the basic influence we feel from God when it comes to our coping with what our life brings us. God encourages us to engage what our life brings us and offers us help is doing so in that one facet of God or another will be active within us to help us navigate what we are facing.

Unless, that is, we are not able to do so, and this is where the caution applies. Any time we "traverse through" we face the likelihood of encountering what in the text are termed "great windstorms." The Greek is "big wind, a whirlwind." Used as a metaphor, a whirlwind is "a very energetic or tumultuous person or process." Internally we could say when we seek to go through an issue that has surfaced for us rather than go around it, we can meet an element of our personality with which we have little or no experience and its energy or urgency confuses or disorients us. Said differently, we can be asked to face feelings or think thoughts

which overwhelm our ego in that they flood us with material which conflicts us so that our ego is inundated. If we think of our ego as a boat afloat on our unconscious, what is seeking to surface in our awareness overwhelms our ego and interferes with its working.

These are times when what is presented to us agitates us excessively, and in those times, we are encouraged to tell God that we believe we are perishing, in that what we are facing will be the ruin of us. What God does is "rebuke" the confusion (the Greek implies "forbids" it), and says to whatever is surfacing from the unconscious, "Peace! Be still.", Greek words which tell what is surfacing to be "dumb" in the sense of silent as in imposing an involuntary stillness on it. The text is encouraging us to sympathetically attend to the state of our ego, recognizing when it is overwhelmed and unable to process any more, and to honor its condition by asking God to keep it safe by helping us back away from any urgency in us to overcome what is assailing us. The text says the agitation and/or confusion "ceases," a Greek word meaning "tires." I think what tires in us is our drive to get over or beyond what we are facing, and when that drive "gets tired" our internal pressure relaxes. The consequence is that "dead calm" comes to us, Greek words which mean "big tranquility." That is, we get a break, a rest. The material from our unconscious will surface again at a later time, a time when we are better able to engage with it. And even then, we can again ask to be kept safe. Slowly, over time, in this back and forth process, our ego becomes more capable of receiving and processing and what comes from the unconscious, and what comes from the unconscious will arrive in smaller bites that are easier to chew and digest.

In the text Jesus says to the disciples: "Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?" I caution us against hearing these as criticisms. The Greek is a little different, asking "Why are you timid? How is it that you are not having any faith?" I read the questions as encouraging us to wonder and be curious, rather than as chastising us for being as we are. In order to legitimately ask the questions, we need to be sympathetic to our being as we are, and not assume that God criticizes us for being as we are. Faith would involve our trusting

that we are acceptable as we are, and then proceeding to actually wonder about the subjects raised by Jesus' questions.

[Jim Robie, 6-22-18, 5<sup>th</sup> after Pentecost, Cycle B, Mark 4:35-41]